



United Nations
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Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
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Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

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for the *Economic Cooperation and Development Review*

“The Power of Culture for Development”

UNESCO, February 2013

The Rise of Culture

There was a time when culture was not uttered in the same sentence with development. Culture was associated with traditions and customs that were sometimes seen as obstacles to development, or it was linked with elitist art and narrowly defined in scope. Culture was of the past, whereas development was for the future. At best, culture stood on the sidelines of development policies. At worst, it was viewed as retrograde.

This is changing. The process of globalisation is transforming all societies and bringing culture urgently to the fore. Societies are increasingly diverse and interconnected. This opens vast new opportunities for exchange and mutual enrichment between persons of different and plural cultures. It is also raising new questions about exclusion, discrimination and prejudice, calling for new competencies of cultural literacy, through languages and education.

The deep crisis that has shaken every economy of the world since 2008 has accelerated the rise of culture. Governments everywhere are rethinking strategies for growth and seeking to identify new sources of dynamism. At this moment of change, the power of culture is increasingly recognized as a force for sustainability in development.

The facts speak for themselves. Cultural and creative industries are some of the most rapidly growing sectors in the world, representing an estimated global value of US\$ 1.3 trillion. Average growth rates represent 13.9 percent in Africa, 11.9 percent in South America, 17.6 percent in the Middle East, 9.7 percent in Asia, 6.9 percent in Oceania, and 4.3 percent in North and Central America – exceeding the rates of growth of the service industries and manufacturing. Cultural industries account today for an estimated 3-4 percent of the global gross domestic product. Cultural tourism represents some 40 percent of total world tourism revenues, in a sector that has grown continually over the last decade. Across the world, culture plays an increasing role as a source of employment and revenue.

At the same time, culture is a source of wealth in ways that do not have price tags. Culture can help promote social cohesion and youth engagement, and it is a wellspring for social resilience. This is the case for countries across the world, at all levels of development. These benefits may be hard to quantify, but their impact is immeasurable and they are essential for all societies today. This is also why UNESCO is so committed to safeguarding and protecting cultural heritage, especially in situations of conflict. This heritage does not only provide revenue and employment for local communities – more fundamentally, it is a source of identity and a force for cohesion and reconciliation.

UNESCO's position is clear. We are living in a new age of limits -- in terms of the resources of the planet and material assets. In this context, we must make far more of the single most powerful and renewable energy there is – that of innovation. UNESCO is committed to releasing the full power of human ingenuity as a source of resilience at a time of change and as a wellspring for creativity and growth. Culture is essential here. It is a driver of development, led by the growth of the cultural sector, creative industries, tourism, and the arts and crafts. It is also an enabler of sustainable development -- the context in which development policies can move forward, through local ownership, with greater efficiency and impact. The power of culture for development lies precisely in its sustainability at the local level.

In 2000, the world agreed on a set of Millennium Development Goals, “to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world’s people,” on the basis of the principles of human dignity, equality and equity.¹ Culture was not part of the eight goals, whose deadline stands in 2015. As the international community shapes a new global sustainability agenda to follow 2015, we must ensure that culture is not left on the sidelines. The power of culture must be recognized -- development must be about human potential and capacity, and there is nothing more human than culture. Culture is an enabler and a driver for sustainable development. It has also an inherent, unquantifiable, value as a source of strength and creativity essential for every individual and every society.

We need to broaden the debate about development and ensure that the future agenda includes culture’s transformative power. Culture can be a resource to address both the economic and human rights dimensions of poverty and to provide innovative and cross-cutting solutions to complex issues -- such as health and the environment, gender equality and promoting quality education for all. It is also a source of identity and cohesion for societies at a time of bewildering change. No development can be sustainable without it.

UNESCO is acting at two levels to make its case. We are working at the global level to set a clear policy and normative framework, while acting also at country level, where the impact of culture really counts.

Movement at the Global Level

The global awakening on the power of culture for development is a sign of new times. But it does not come out of the blue. This reflects UNESCO’s longstanding efforts to champion a new understanding of culture as a dynamic force for renewal and creativity.

¹ *United Nations Millennium Declaration*, adopted by the UN General Assembly.

The first milestone was laid in the 1982 *World Conference on Cultural Policies* held in Mexico that linked culture and development tightly together.² The World Conference widened the definition of culture to include “a whole complex of distinctive, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features” -- meaning “not only the arts and letters but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs.” UNESCO also made the most of its leadership of the *World Decade on Culture and Development* (1988-1998) to advocate for greater recognition of culture’s contribution to national and international development policies.

In 1996, the *UN World Commission on Culture and Development*, led by J. Perez de Cuellar, published a landmark report, Our Creative Diversity, which examined the importance of culture for development and called for rethinking development in its light.³ The Report highlighted cultural diversity as a motor for creativity and innovation that is vital for social and economic development.

The 1998 *UNESCO Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development*, held in Stockholm, set a new milestone. Its *Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development* stated that “sustainable development and the flourishing of cultures are interdependent.”⁴ It reaffirmed the “harmony between cultural and development,” and declared that cultural diversity was an “essential factor of development” – development, it agreed, that must be “sensitive to culture itself.” One year later, UNESCO and the World Bank held an Intergovernmental Conference, “Culture Counts” in Florence, which highlighted the importance of ‘cultural capital’ for sustainable development and economic growth.

² *UNESCO Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies*, World Conference on Cultural Policies, Mexico City, 26 July - 6 August 1982.

³ See Our Creative Diversity, The World Commission on Culture and Development, available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0010/001055/105586e.pdf>

⁴ *Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development*, adopted in by the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development.

Culture was not included in the Millennium Development Goals established after the 2000 *Millennium Declaration*, but its power has since been increasingly recognized. The 2005 *World Summit Outcome Document*, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, acknowledged explicitly the diversity of cultures as a contribution to the enrichment of humankind.⁵ The *Outcome Document* of the 2010 Millennium Development Goal Summit went a step further, highlighting “the importance of culture for development and its contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.”⁶

Great strides were made by two United Nations General Assembly Resolutions on ‘Culture and Development,’ adopted in 2010 and 2011 (65/166 and 66/208). Individual countries were instrumental in securing agreement on these resolutions, especially Peru and Cuba. The General Assembly resolutions recognized that culture is an “essential component of human development” and “an important factor in the fight against poverty, providing for economic growth and ownership of the development processes.” On this basis, the resolutions called for mainstreaming culture into development policies at all levels.

Culture features in the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda. In June 2012, the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 Development Agenda issued a report entitled *Realizing the Future We Want for All*.⁷ The starting point was clear: “Business as usual cannot be an option and transformative change is needed. As the challenges are highly interdependent, a new, more holistic approach is needed to address them.” Culture has a clear role to play in the “transformative change needed for a rights-based, equitable and sustainable process of global development.” Paragraph 71 of the report declared:

⁵ *World Summit Outcome Document*, adopted by the UN General Assembly (60/1).

⁶ *Keeping the Promise -- United to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*, Outcome Document of the 2010 MDG Summit.

⁷ Available at: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Post_2015_UNTTreport.pdf

It is critical to promote equitable change that ensures people's ability to choose their value systems in peace, thereby allowing for full participation and empowerment. Communities and individuals must be able to create and practice their own culture and enjoy that of others free from fear. This will require, *inter alia*, respect for cultural diversity, safeguarding cultural and natural heritage, fostering cultural institutions, strengthening cultural and creative industries, and promoting cultural tourism.

These are strong steps forward. However, culture must not just be seen as an enabler and a driver of development. It carries also inherent value for individuals and societies, as a source of belonging and a wellspring for creativity.

UNESCO's advocacy at the global level builds on foundations that UNESCO has set with a comprehensive set of normative instruments in the area of culture.

These instruments concern tangible heritage (1972 World Heritage Convention), intangible heritage (2003 Convention), as well as underwater cultural heritage (2001 Convention). The UNESCO normative framework includes also the struggle against the illicit international trafficking of cultural property and the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict (1954 *Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict* and the 1970 *Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property*).

The 2005 *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* is especially important. Member States agreed that cultural diversity "increases the range of choices and nurtures human capacities and values, and therefore is a mainspring for sustainable development for communities, peoples and nations."⁸ The Convention reaffirmed the "importance of the link between culture and development for

⁸ For all references to UNESCO's work, consult the UNESCO website: www.unesco.org

all countries, particularly for developing countries,” and called for “actions undertaken nationally and internationally to secure recognition of the true value of this link.”

This normative framework represents a cultural governance system, based on human rights, engaging States in a continual process of dialogue and cooperation at the international level. The UNESCO conventions also help design and implement national cultural policies with strong social and economic impact. UNESCO is working to build national capacities (cultural institutions, professional networks and local communities) and to support policies and regulatory frameworks that create an enabling environment to safeguard and promote cultural resources.

UNESCO plays a leading role as the specialised UN agency for culture – but it is far from alone. Some 18 UN organizations also work in this area, including through joint programming at country level, where culture really counts.⁹

Action at the Country Level

Nowhere is the link between culture and development more clear than at the country level. New cultural powerhouses are emerging in every region of the world. More and more countries are investing to develop vibrant culture sectors, and they are requesting the support of the United Nations to their efforts. At the global level, we are still making the case for culture and development – at the national level, the argument has already been won.

We see this in the demands of countries for UN support. In 2006, culture was mentioned in less than 30 percent of UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) – the core UN strategy to support a country’s development. By 2012, this had risen to 70 percent, with the majority of

⁹ These include UNDP, UNIDO, UNWTO, IFAD, WIPO, FAO, UNEP, UNCTAD, UNITAR, UNOPS, UNAIDS, UNHCR, UN-Habitat, UNFPA, UNV

entries linked to culture for social and economic development.¹⁰ In the Arab region, the figure stands at 89 percent of UNDAFs, with most entries focusing on culture for economic development. For a number of countries – Cambodia, Bangladesh and China, for instance -- culture has been defined as a main outcome in the UNDAFs. This trend testifies to the rising demand by Governments and the integration of culture into UN efforts.

UNESCO's leadership of the Culture and Development Joint Programmes of the *Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund* (MDG-F) helped accelerate this trend.

Financed by Spain between 2006-2008, and running until 2013, the MDG-F covered eight “thematic windows” -- including one on Culture and Development, led by UNESCO. This major country-level effort (representing US\$ 96 million) encompassed 18 large-scale programmes, undertaken in the Arab States, Africa, Latin America, Asia and South-East Europe, with benefits reaching an estimated 10 million people. A clear goal guided this work -- to demonstrate culture's contribution to development at the national level and boost progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. To these ends, the Joint Programmes sought to harness the potential of culture for poverty reduction and to bolster social cohesion.

Four Joint Programmes were implemented in the Arab region -- in Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco and Palestine -- to a total budget of US\$ 20 million. Overall, these programmes reached 32,000 direct beneficiaries (of which 56 percent are women) and 388,000 indirect beneficiaries (of which 50 percent are women). The objectives were to support employment and income generation in the culture sector, especially for unemployed individuals and women. The overall goal has been to safeguard and promote both tangible and intangible cultural heritage by bolstering human and institutional

¹⁰ For a search tool on the culture entry points in UNDAFs, consult the UNESCO website: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/culture-in-the-undafs/search-tool/>

capacities and strengthening cultural infrastructures to develop tourism and facilitate participation in cultural life.

To these ends, the Joint Programmes worked to improve market access for cultural goods through cultural fairs and festivals, and by building synergies with existing national initiatives in the crafts sector. This work sought to safeguard and promote cultural assets while supporting creative activity. In Morocco, for instance, we helped to establish new local units for the production of couscous, dates and baskets. Across the region, the Joint Programmes worked to maximise the potential of cultural tourism for economic and social development. All of these efforts were guided by the idea that cultural tourism and the celebration of cultural diversity are important for fostering social cohesion and tolerance.

Examples

Supporting Cultural Tourism in Anatolia, Turkey

Working with UNICEF, UNDP and WTO, UNESCO coordinated activities to integrate cultural resources into tourism development policies in Turkey's Kars province of Eastern Anatolia. This involved a management plan, elaborated with local stakeholders for the ancient site of Ani, as well as an automated digital data system to conserve, monitor and supervise cultural and natural sites in Kars. At the same time, local authorities were provided with training on establishing a framework for heritage legislation.

Supporting Creative Industries in Egypt

In Egypt, at the Dahshur World Heritage Site, training helped to develop and strengthen eco-friendly creative industries with the participation of 200 local participants, including 140 women, to produce and sell handicrafts to local NGOs using palm tree branches and leaves. This boosted local jobs and incomes and fostered a new community of artisans and handicraft producers.

Supporting Cultural Festivals in Mauritania

The Joint Programme identified the need to create dynamic cultural events to promote the safeguarding of intangible heritage and boost the cultural industry. There are now a dozen regional and national festivals held each year in Mauritania. These festivals attract large audiences, merchants and

service providers, promoting domestic tourism and increase of income and contributing to social cohesion.

At the same time, UNESCO has worked to support cultural industries as motors for social and economic development. In the context of the 2005 *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, UNESCO steers an International Fund for Cultural Diversity, whose purpose is to promote sustainable development and poverty reduction in developing and least developed countries that are parties to the Convention.

Our goal is to foster the emergence of dynamic cultural sectors, by facilitating the introduction of new cultural policies and cultural industries and strengthening existing ones. The idea is to support the power of creative industries to create employment and income opportunities, especially for women and marginalized groups, as well as to strengthen social inclusion.

To date, the International Fund for Cultural Diversity has supported 61 projects from 40 developing countries totalling US\$3.9 million in funding. The projects cover a wide range of activities – from capacity-building and cultural mapping to policy analysis and development, including entrepreneurship support and the consolidation of cultural industries.

Example -- Supporting Cultural Industries in Benin

In Benin, the International Fund for Cultural Diversity is supporting the NGO *World Rhythm Productions* in developing a new business model for the music sector by negotiating new agreements with 100 music distribution points in Cotonou. These contracts will ensure that Beninese musicians can sell their work locally.

In all of these ways, UNESCO is supporting the emergence of dynamic cultural industries and markets at the national level, to generate new employment opportunities and revenues and contribute to social cohesion.

All of this work is underpinned by the idea that culture is a force for dialogue, within and between societies. In 2011, I launched a new global initiative,

Culture: a Bridge to Development, to make more of culture's role as a bridge to sustainable development and social cohesion. The focus falls on enhancing creativity, cultural industries and cultural heritage. We held a first major event in the city of Edirne, Turkey, in November 2012. Organized with the Governorate and Municipality of Edirne, the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bahçeşehir University, and the Balkanika Foundation, this brought together culture professionals, municipalities, intellectuals, universities, and the private sector from across the region. This initiative draws on the power of culture as a motor for deeper regional integration, by highlighting shared histories and traditions and by providing a source of renewed creativity and innovation.

The same spirit guides the preparations undertaken to nominate the Qhapaq Ñan, or Main Andean Road by Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, reflecting their recognition of a common cultural heritage of outstanding value. This illustrates the power of culture to strengthen links across borders and entire continents.

The 40th anniversary of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention in 2012 was an opportunity for 189 countries to renew their commitment to the revolutionary idea at its heart, that there are places in the world of "outstanding universal value" that must be protected for all to share, today and in the future.

In UNESCO's vision, culture and heritage is both the way we understand the world and the means by which we shape it. It is a source of energy that is endlessly renewable, which provides income and jobs to local communities but also knowledge upon which to build a better future. This is especially important after natural disasters or situations of conflict.

In Indonesia, for instance, UNESCO reacted quickly in the wake of the 2010 eruptions of Mount Merapi – when volcanic ash blanketed the World Heritage site of Borobudur and its surroundings and posed a severe threat to the local communities and Indonesia's most visited tourist attraction. This

major Buddhist temple complex, dating back to the 8th and 9th centuries, had been painstakingly restored after centuries of neglect and destruction by natural forces thanks to a UNESCO-led international safeguarding campaign, launched in 1972. After the eruptions, UNESCO worked with the Government, local authorities and the local community to clean the temple compound and to preserve its natural setting. This involved also capacity-building for revenue generation. These efforts are designed to harness the power of cultural heritage for social resilience and the revival of economic activity at the local level.

This is why UNESCO acts to protect cultural heritage in situations of conflict. This is the case most recently in Mali. Timbuktu's three major mosques, Djingareyber, Sankore and Sidi Yah, along with 16 mausoleums, were inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1988. The Askia Tomb in the city of Gao followed in 2004. In July 2012, following the destruction of 11 of the mausoleums, and the doors of Sidi Yah, both sites were inscribed on UNESCO's List of World Heritage in Danger. UNESCO is working with the Government and local authorities to strengthen their capacity to safeguard and protect this heritage. We provided topographic maps and coordinates to the armed forces of Mali, France and Chad to help prevent shelling of these sites. We are working also with the leaders of Mali's neighbouring countries, as well as with Interpol, the World Customs Organization and all those involved with the art market, urging them to be vigilant as to the illicit export and traffic of any cultural artefact out of the country.

After my visit to Mali on 2 February, 2013, UNESCO is preparing an Action Plan with the Government of Mali to rehabilitate cultural heritage damaged during the conflict with the active participation of local communities and to protect the region's ancient manuscripts. We will provide training activities to restore the conditions for the conservation and management of Mali's tangible and intangible. All of this is essential for restoring national unity in the country and for strengthening social cohesion – these are the foundations for long-term reconciliation and sustainable development.

Cultural heritage is also source of knowledge for sustainability. In Africa, for instance, many World Heritage sites are protected through traditional management systems that have ensured their existence over the centuries. These remarkable sources of knowledge carry important lessons on sustainably managing resources. We must protect this knowledge, capture it and share it widely.

Next Steps

We must build on these achievements to set a new global agenda for sustainable development to follow 2015. This agenda must make the most of the transformative power of culture and its importance for the sustainability of development.

In 2013, we have several key opportunities to make our case:

- An International Congress "Culture: Key to Sustainable Development" will be held in Hangzhou, China, from 15-17 May 2013. This is the first International Congress focusing on the linkages between culture and sustainable development organized by UNESCO since the 1998 Stockholm Conference. The Congress will provide the first global forum to discuss the role of culture in sustainable development in view of the post-2015 development framework.
- In June, the President of the 67th UN General Assembly will convene a Thematic Debate on Culture and Development, with UNESCO's support. This will be an important opportunity to explore the linkages between culture and development at the UN in New York.
- The 2013 ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review focuses on "Science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals" -- this will be a key moment to shape the contours of a post-2015 global agenda, with consideration for the role of culture.

- UNESCO and UNDP are jointly preparing the third edition of the *UN Creative Economy Report*, to be published in 2013. The Report explores the importance of the creative economy at the local level, focusing on the power of cities as motors for sustainable development, and it calls for more coherent UN system work to support policy at the global, regional and national levels.
- In the autumn of 2013, Indonesia, with UNESCO as a partner, will organize a first *World Culture in Development Forum*. This will be important opportunity, especially as President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia co-chairs the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.
- The UN Secretary-General will submit a report on Culture and Development to the UN General Assembly, led by UNESCO, which will help set the context for a third UN General Assembly resolution on this theme.

This year is critical for shaping the contours of a new global sustainability agenda. The Report of the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 Development Agenda highlighted four key areas for this -- (i) peace and security, (ii) inclusive social development, (iii) inclusive economic development, and (iv) and environmental sustainability.

Culture matters at each level:

- 1. Culture is key for peace and security.** As a source of identity and strength, culture is a vital resource for empowering communities to participate fully in social and cultural life. Respect for culture facilitates inclusive governance and dialogue at the national and international levels and can contribute to conflict prevention and mitigation. Experience across the world shows that it can be vital for reconciliation and recovery after conflicts or disasters. Culture is crucial for peace-building and laying the foundations for lasting peace.

- 2. Culture is key for inclusive social development.** Culture is a force for inclusion that is important for communities and individuals aspiring for more effective governance and increased cultural choices. To be sustainable and equitable, development must be relevant to all, including local communities and indigenous peoples, through appropriate recognition of cultural rights, traditional knowledge systems, cultural heritage and the rich diversity of environmental and sustainability practices. In these ways, culture can provide sustainability to all development efforts.

- 3. Culture is key for inclusive economic development.** The importance of culture -- in all its forms (handicrafts, festivals or performing arts, cultural institutions such as museums or heritage sites, both natural and cultural) – is growing in value across the world as a source of income generation and job creation. The impact is especially important at the community level, where it can help empower individuals, improve living conditions and foster community-based economic growth. Growth through culture carries economic benefits, while advancing social cohesion.

- 4. Culture is key for environmental sustainability.** Protection of cultural and biological diversity and natural heritage is vital for sustainable development. Supporting traditional systems of environmental protection and resource management can contribute to increased sustainability of fragile ecosystems as well as the preservation of biodiversity. At a time of rapid environmental change, culture can help design better adaptive strategies.

The world is changing quickly and placing new demands before every society – the demand for solidarity against the pressures of fragmentation, the demand for innovation in an age of limits. Culture has answers to both. It is a source of cohesion and a motor for sustainability. More and more governments recognize this – we all must build on culture for a more

sustainable future. At this time when we are rethinking development and setting a new agenda, culture must play its full part.

Dear Director-General,

Please find enclosed a draft article on for the *Economic Cooperation and Development Review*, produced by the Turkish-based Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), a subsidiary organ of the *Organization of the Islamic Cooperation*.

The article brings together your arguments for culture as a force for development in this crucial year and in the run-up to 2015.

The draft has been reviewed by the Sector and also inside ODG.

Thank you, and best wishes,

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